

## National Aeronautics and Space Admin.

## § 1206.610

(3) Include a statement that the final determination is subject to judicial review under 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(4); and

(4) Enclose a copy of 5 U.S.C. 552(a)(4).

### § 1206.608 Time extensions in unusual circumstances.

(a) In “unusual circumstances” as that term is defined in §1206.101(f), the time limits for an initial determination (see §1206.603 and §1206.604) and for a final determination (see §1206.607) may be extended, but not to exceed a total of 10 working days in the aggregate in the processing of any specific request for an Agency record.

(b) If an extension of time under this section would be required, the requester shall be promptly notified of the reasons therefor and the date when a determination will be sent.

(c) If a record described in a request cannot be located within the 20-working-day time limit for an initial determination, after consultation with a professional NASA employee who is familiar with the subject area of the request, that fact normally will justify an initial determination that the record requested cannot be identified or located, rather than a decision that an extension of time under this section would be appropriate.

(d) In exceptional circumstances, if it would be impossible to complete a search for or review of Agency records within the 20-working-day period for an initial determination, an official authorized to make an initial determination or the designee may seek an extension of time from the requester. If such an extension of time can be agreed upon, that fact should be clearly documented and the initial determination made within the extended time period; if not, an initial determination that the record cannot be identified or located, or reviewed, within the 20-working-day time limit shall be made under §1206.603. “Exceptional circumstances” do not include a delay that results from a predictable Agency workload of requests unless the Agency demonstrates reasonable progress in reducing its backlog of pending requests. Refusal by the requester to reasonably modify the scope of a request or arrange an alternative time frame

for processing the request shall be considered as a factor in determining whether exceptional circumstances exist.

### § 1206.609 Litigation.

In any instance in which a requester brings suit concerning a request for an Agency record under this part, the matter shall promptly be referred to the General Counsel together with a report on the details and status of the request. In such a case, if a final determination with respect to the request has not been made, such a determination shall be made as soon as possible, under procedures prescribed by the General Counsel in each case.

### § 1206.610 Notice to submitters of commercial information.

(a) *General policy.* Upon receipt of a request for commercial information pursuant to the Freedom of Information Act, NASA shall provide the submitter with notice of the request in accordance with the requirements of this section.

(b) *Notice to submitters.* Except as provided in paragraph (g) or (h) of this section, the Agency shall make a good faith effort to provide a submitter with prompt notice of a request appearing to encompass its commercial information whenever required under paragraph (c) of this section. Such notice shall identify the commercial information requested and shall inform the submitter of the opportunity to object to its disclosure in accordance with paragraph (d) of this section. If the submitter would not otherwise have access to the document that contains the information, upon the request of the submitter, the Agency shall provide access to, or copies of, the records or portions thereof containing the commercial information. This notice shall be provided in writing upon the request of the submitter. Whenever the Agency provides notice pursuant to this section, the Agency shall advise the requester that notice and opportunity to comment are being provided to the submitter.

(c) *When notice is required.* Notice shall be given to a submitter whenever the information has been designated by the submitter as information deemed

protected from disclosure under Exemption 4 of the Act, or the Agency otherwise has reason to believe that the information may be protected from disclosure under Exemption 4.

(d) *Opportunity to object to disclosure.* Through the notice described in paragraph (b) of this section, the Agency shall afford a submitter a reasonable period within which to provide the Agency with a detailed statement of any objection to disclosure. This period shall not exceed 10 working days from the date after which the Agency can reasonably assume receipt of notice by the submitter, unless the submitter provides a reasonable explanation justifying additional time to respond. If the Agency does not receive a response from the submitter within this period, the Agency shall proceed with its review of the information and initial determination. The submitter's response shall include all bases, factual or legal, for withholding any of the information pursuant to Exemption 4. Information provided by a submitter pursuant to this paragraph may itself be subject to disclosure under the FOIA. Submitters will not be provided additional opportunities to object to disclosure, and, therefore, should provide a complete explanation of any and all bases for withholding any information from disclosure.

(e) *Notice of intent to disclose.* The Agency shall carefully consider any objections of the submitter in the course of determining whether to disclose commercial information. Whenever the Agency decides to disclose commercial information over the objection of a submitter, the Agency shall forward to the submitter a written statement which shall include the following:

(1) A brief explanation as to why the Agency did not agree with any objections;

(2) A description of the commercial information to be disclosed, sufficient to identify the information to the submitter; and

(3) A date after which disclosure is expected. Such notice of intent to disclose shall be forwarded to the submitter in a reasonable number of working days prior to the expected disclosure date.

(f) *Notice of FOIA lawsuit.* Whenever a requester brings suit seeking to compel disclosure of commercial information covered by paragraph (c) of this section, the Agency shall promptly notify the submitter. Whenever a submitter brings suit against the Agency in order to prevent disclosure of commercial information, the Agency shall promptly notify the requester.

(g) *Exceptions to notice requirements.* The notice requirements of this section do not apply if—

(1) The information has been published or otherwise made available to the public.

(2) Disclosure of the information is required by law (other than 5 U.S.C. 552);

(3) The submitter has received notice of a previous FOIA request which encompassed information requested in the later request, and the Agency intends to withhold and/or release information in the same manner as in the previous FOIA request;

(4) Upon submitting the information or within a reasonable period thereafter,

(i) The submitter reviewed its information in anticipation of future requests pursuant to the FOIA,

(ii) Provided the Agency a statement of its objections to disclosure consistent with that described in paragraph (e) of this section, and

(iii) The Agency intends to release information consistent with the submitter's objections;

(5) Notice to the submitter may disclose information exempt from disclosure pursuant to 5 U.S.C. 552(b)(7).

(h)(1) An additional limited exception to the notice requirements of this section, to be used only when all of the following exceptional circumstances are found to be present, authorizes the Agency to withhold information which is the subject of a FOIA request, based on Exemption 4 (5 U.S.C. 552(b)(4)), without providing the submitter individual notice:

(i) The Agency would be required to provide notice to over 10 submitters, in which case, notification may be accomplished by posting or publishing the notice in a place reasonably calculated to accomplish notification.

(ii) Absent any response to the published notice, the Agency determines that if it provided notice as is otherwise required by paragraph (c) of this section, it is reasonable to assume that the submitter would object to disclosure of the information based on Exemption 4; and,

(iii) If the submitter expressed the anticipated objections, the Agency would uphold those objections.

(2) This exemption shall be used only with the approval of the Chief Counsel of the Center, the Attorney-Advisor to the Inspector General, or the Associate General Counsel responsible for providing advice on the request. This exception shall not be used for a class of documents or requests, but only as warranted by an individual FOIA request.

[64 FR 39404, July 22, 1999, as amended at 65 FR 19647, Apr. 12, 2000]

### Subpart 7—Search, Review, and Duplication Fees

#### § 1206.700 Schedule of fees.

The fees specified in this section shall be charged for searching for, reviewing, and/or duplicating Agency records made available in response to a request under this part.

(a) *Copies.* For copies of documents such as letters, memoranda, statements, reports, contracts, etc., \$0.10 per copy of each page. For copies of oversize documents, such as maps, charts, etc., \$0.15 for each reproduced copy per square foot. These charges for copies include the time spent in duplicating the documents. For copies of computer disks, still photographs, blueprints, videotapes, engineering drawings, hard copies of aperture cards, etc., the fee charged will reflect the full direct cost to NASA of reproducing or copying the record.

(b) *Clerical searches.* For each one-quarter hour spent by clerical personnel in searching for an Agency record in response to a request under this part, \$3.75.

(c) *Nonroutine, nonclerical searches.* When a search cannot be performed by clerical personnel; for example, when the task of determining which records fall within a request and collecting

them requires the time of professional or managerial personnel, and when the amount of time that must be expended in the search and collection of the requested records by such higher level personnel is substantial, charges for the search may be made at a rate in excess of the clerical rate, namely for each one-quarter hour spent by such higher level personnel in searching for a requested record, \$7.50.

(d) *Review of records.* For commercial use requests only, when time is spent reviewing to determine whether they are exempt from mandatory disclosure, a charge may be made at the rate for each one-quarter hour spent by an attorney, \$11.25. No charge shall be made for the time spent in resolving general legal or policy issues regarding the application of exemptions. This charge will only be assessed the first time NASA reviews a record and not at the administrative appeal level.

(e) *Computerized records.* Because of the diversity in the types and configurations of computers which may be required in responding to requests for Agency records maintained in whole or in part in computerized form, it is not feasible to establish a uniform schedule of fees for search and printout of such records. In most instances, records maintained in computer data banks are available also in printed form and the standard fees specified in paragraph (a) of this section shall apply. If the request for an Agency record required to be made available under this part requires a computerized search or printout, the charge for the time of personnel involved shall be at the rates specified in paragraphs (b) and (c) of this section. The charge for the computer time involved and for any special supplies or materials used shall not exceed the direct cost to NASA. This charge may be as high as \$125.00 per quarter hour. Before any computer search or printout is undertaken in response to a request for an Agency record, the requester shall be notified of the applicable unit costs involved and the total estimated cost of the search and/or printout.

(f) *Other search and duplication costs.* Reasonable standard fees, other than as specified in paragraphs (a) through (e) of this section, may be charged for